

Working Paper

17 November 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR: Dr. Clarke

SUBJECT : Next Steps on DCI Response to PFIAB re COINS

1. The ASD(I) redraft of the letter from Mr. Colby to Admiral Anderson of PFIAB is at Attachment 1. I have consulted Chuck Briggs, as you requested, and we are in general agreement about the ASD(I) redraft. Our views run this way:

a. The ASD(I) redraft raises some valid questions about "whither COINS." These are appropriate for further discussion between ASD(I) and DCI representatives, but should not be surfaced in a DCI letter to PFIAB.

b. The tone and content of the ASD(I) redraft is not suitable for Mr. Colby's use. The ASD(I) version oversells and could mislead. It has too much ASD(I) in it, which is likely to be unconvincing to the PFIAB. It has a suggestion of a "down boy" approach. It contains some flat statements that are not as clearly correct as the text implies.

c. The statement in paragraph 2 that "We are now working with CIA toward bringing their file systems directly into the COINS community" is an implied criticism of CIA. Also, it is misleading in that the suggested result is actually several years off as well as conjectural from a policy standpoint.

2. My conclusion is that this draft could not be edited to make it suitable for Mr. Colby to send to the Board. Rather, we should merely thank ASD(I) for the suggestions.

3. Here is where I think we now stand:

a. We have tried several drafts in which we have tried to say to PFIAB that we take their message seriously, and we list a number of specific steps that the DCI is taking in the short run while an overall plan is being developed. Those steps focus on file improvement. -- Apparently, neither Mr. Colby, other CIA advisors, or ASD(I) feel comfortable with this approach.

b. ASD(I) is committed to report back to PFIAB with a detailed plan in January 1974. ASD(I) has a very short time and a very long ways to go to make good on this commitment in a way that will satisfy the Board. We can anticipate continuing PFIAB pressure.

c. As between DCI and ASD(I), there is now no common philosophical agreement on the concept and objectives for COINS. ASD(I) was made Executive Agent, but that has not been specifically defined. [ ] is seeking to take his usual aggressive action to fill all vacuums. While technical aspects of COINS can best be handled by ASD(I), the questions of which files should be included in the COINS-of-the-future and what users are to be served seem to me to be closely related to substantive intelligence production functions. In this area ASD(I) should not have the last word, and the concept of Executive Agent should be so limited.

d. Conclusions:

(1) ASD(I) needs DCI guidance or it will continue to move ahead on all fronts more or less unilaterally.

(2) A response from the DCI is overdue to the Board.

4. Proposal for Action.

a. 1st Preference. Persuade DCI to direct a short-term assignment of Chuck Briggs, with whatever assistance from us he desires, to do a survey for Mr. Colby, to be completed before Christmas. If this course is approved by DCI, the reply to Admiral Anderson could take the form of a brief assurance of DCI's concern and notification of this action. (I do not know of any other single individual who would have Mr. Colby's confidence and the breadth of experience to make a sound appraisal of all aspects of the COINS problem.)

b. 2nd Preference. This involves three parts, as follows:

(1) DCI respond now to PFIAB, taking as guide the points listed by Mr. Colby to General Graham (see Attachment 2). Make this letter shorter and more general than the one we floated in IRAC to [ ] (which was also based on the above guidance but was more detailed). (Graham memo of 30 October 73 and a proposed new draft of a DCI to Anderson letter are at Attachment 2.)

(2) In addition, DCI should decide and advise whether he plans to establish some kind of advisory mechanism. (The draft reply, Attachment 2, assumes he does so intend.) Such a mechanism should have terms of reference and a reporting deadline. The terms of reference should make it clear whether Mr. Colby wants the advisory mechanism to focus on COINS viz-a-viz CIA or COINS viz-a-viz the total community.

(3) In addition, Mr. Colby should be aware that IC Staff and IHC will be working continually with ASD(I) people to develop the report promised PFIAB in January. This is consistent with the DCI instruction to General Graham (Attachment 2). 24

5. Please advise.

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Attachments

Acting Chairman, USIB/IHC

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